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The Decorator and Furnisher Supplement,

DEVOTED TO THE

Upholstery, Carpet, Furniture and House Furnishing Trades.

VOL. X.

MAY, 1887.

No. 2.

In writing those mentioned herein please quote this journal.

AMONG THE TRADES.

BUSINESS in all branches pertaining to house decoration and furnishing is reported as unusually good. Manufacturers are doing an excellent business, and despite the labor agitation, which has done much to depress the otherwise buoyant market, there is but little cause for complaint. Had the late strikes been avoided and the tide of business permitted to run in its natural channels, the present would doubtless have been one of the most prosperous seasons for many years. As it is much valuable time has been lost and there are arrearages to make up, for while the income stops the outgo never does, for people must at least eat, and as a consequence, the country and trade generally is handicapped with the results of the agitation which is every year growing more and more ominous and threatening.

THE Spring is pre-eminently the season for repairs and reconstruction, as well as the beginning of new buildings and the starting of new enterprises. With such work in contemplation all first class constructors and intelligent people generally are interested in new and practical ideas and inventions looking to the perfection of their work, and the durability and usefulness of the dwellings or other buildings they have in process of construction.

Among the most useful of building materials, whether for use in new or old buildings, is EHRET'S BLACK DIAMOND PREPARED ROOFING. This material is composed of heavy felt, either two or three ply, according to the use for which it is intended. The felt is saturated with a compound of asphalt cement, which renders it strictly waterproof, and is a complete protection against the ignition of roofs from sparks or flying cinders. It is very easy of application, any person of ordinary judgment being able to apply it without difficulty by simply following the accompanying directions.

Among the many points of excellence claimed for this material is the ease with which it is applied. It comes all ready for laying and everything required for the work is sent with it. It may be applied over old roofing, which need not be removed, care being taken that there are no protruding nails to cut holes in the fabric. Rust, water, or extreme changes of heat and cold have no effect upon it. The pitch of the roof is immaterial, as the composition will neither run in summer under the most trying sun or crack in the coldest weather in winter. It is comparatively inexpensive, costing less than tin shingles or iron. It does not affect the water of the cisterns, as after the first two or three rains there will be no taste or color, and the water may be used for all domestic purposes. The amateur farmer will find this roofing particularly convenient and useful in covering porches of country houses, summer houses, chicken houses and the many minor shelters in which people living in the country in summer delight.

MESSRS. CHAS. H. GILLESPIE & Sons, 557 to 562 West Twenty-fifth Street, New York, are manufacturers of the purest grades of Varnish and Hard Oil Finish for cabinet work. So much of the beauty of fine furniture depends upon the finish, that this branch of manufacture is growing every year more and more important. Messrs. Gillespie & Sons have been industriously engaged in making improvements in these specialties,

until they are well nigh perfect. Having been established in this line since 1824 they claim by right that their long experience enables them to produce the highest grade of goods, and with their immense facilities and improved machinery and apparatus, there is no difficulty in filling all orders with promptness and accuracy. Persons who have not made the different qualities of finish a study, and who have been disappointed in the results obtained with various preparations in the market, are recommended to try the hard oil finish manufactured by this firm.

MESSRS. WILLIAM H. POST & Co., Hartford, Conn., come to the front with an announcement of unusual bargains in carpets and general house decorations for spring season of 1887. The public have for years been in the habit of expecting special attractions, either in the line of prices or of goods, from time to time at this great carpet house—and they have never been disappointed. This spring, with a full stock in

all departments, the firm have broken the prices, and placed their immense and elegant collection within the means of everybody. There is no similar establishment in New England which has a better reputation for the diversity and excellence of its merchandise, the fairness of its prices, or the enterprise of its management. The rare in art, the rich and beautiful, and the useful, are always at command here, and no problem of exquisite house furnishing or decorating has ever been submitted to William H. Post & Co. without meeting a practical solution of the most prompt and satisfactory sort. While this statement is complimentary to the firm, its entire truthfulness is being verified in their almost daily experience.

THE consciousness of possessing well dressed shoes affords real pleasure to civilized beings. There is in fact some esoteric connection between blacking and civilization. Society can be graded according to the covers of the human foot. The first symptom

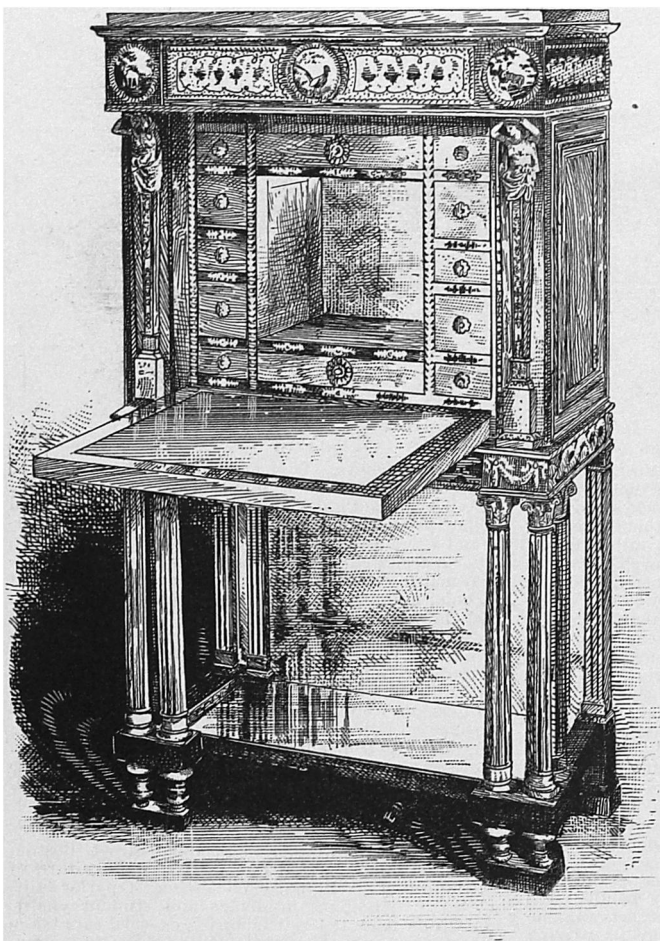


BRASS CABINET, FORTY-THREE INCHES HIGH, TWENTY-SEVEN INCHES WIDE, NINE INCHES DEEP; FRONT AND RAILINGS SOLID CAST BRASS, FINISHED IN POLISHED OR ANTIQUE BRASS; BACK HAMMERED METAL IN OLD SILVER OR ANTIQUE COPPER; PLUSH PANELS. MADE BY THE CHARLES PARKER COMPANY, MERIDEN, CONN.



ITALIAN MARBLE MONUMENT, RECENTLY ERECTED BY J. J. DELANEY & CO., 510-518 TREMONT STREET, BOSTON, FROM A DESIGN BY WILLIAM LYNDON.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



ANTIQUE DESK, OPEN, EXHIBITED BY SYPHER & CO., NEW YORK.

of refined life is the bootblack on the street and the shoe dressing bottle for ladies on the shelf in the bath room, and the chief difference between city and country is that the foot wear of one is black and of the other red.

The number of blackings and dressings is simply legion, but we had not seen a blacking that men could use in the same manner as ladies do dressing, and that would be as well suited for the finest kid as the heaviest kip, until we had the following query put to us in the form of a circular:

"Why must men sweat and groan to polish their shoes when they can do it by the easier and cleaner method of dressing them as ladies do by using WOLFF'S ACME BLACKING?"

This led us to purchase a bottle. We found it gave a brilliant, lasting and waterproof polish. We then handed it to the ladies of our household, who, after using, endorsed it in the highest terms, so proving to our entire satisfaction that civilization had advanced another stride, in the production of a blacking which could be used by both sexes with equal satisfaction.

The advertisement of the Manufacturers, Messrs. WOLFF & RANDOLPH, 933 North Front Street, Philadelphia, on page 60, tells its own tale far better than

we can, and in endorsing Acme Blacking we do so without the slightest hesitancy or fear that it will prove other than it is claimed for it.

AMONG the most remarkable antiques at present in the market may be mentioned some articles of furniture in the possession of Messrs. SYPHER & CO. The most attractive of these is a desk that formerly belonged to the Duchess du Barry. Its origin and history are well authenticated, and this fact adds not a little to the value of the piece. The desk stands about four feet six inches in height and is about two feet and nine inches long. A Sévres plaque occupies the middle of the front or leaf which drops to form the writing table. This is a most exquisite piece of work and is set in a frame of ormolu, which is in turn surrounded by a band of the most exquisite Sévres in delicate colors. On either side are columns of ormolu, with most artistic capital figures. The upper portion of the front is finished in Sévres, a handsome medallion occupying each corner and the middle with fine Sévres panels between. The desk portion is supported by handsomely ornamented double columns at each corner. When opened a row of drawers on each side is disclosed, also larger drawers above and below a large open space. The

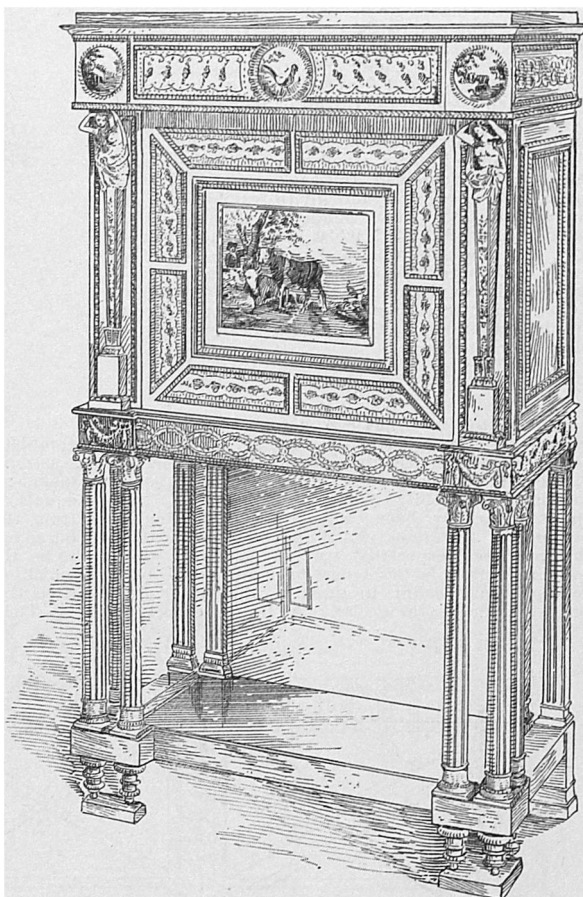
lower part of the desk has a fine mirror plate as the shelf. The entire design and detail are of the most exquisite description.

Another handsome piece is a lace cabinet of fine tulip wood, with elaborate ormolu ornamentation and elegant plaques in Sévres. The illustrations in black and white can give but a faint idea of the beauty of this cabinet. A drawer and folding side give access to the interior.

Another attractive piece is a very old carved oak mantel, taken from a dismantled convent. It is lofty, massive and very elaborately carved. The illustration gives an idea of the shape and general effect of the mantel, but cannot do justice to the time-darkened figures, the mellowness and the suggestive effects that bring before the mind the days when the work was new and around the convent fire church dignitaries may have decided the fate of principalities and powers in the time when the church ruled the state.

Of the many other charming articles in the Sypher collection it is only necessary to say that they comprise one of the finest and most artistic aggregations of the kind in this country, if not in the world. The visitor who leaves New York without passing some portion of the time in this depository of varieties, has left undone a duty which is indeed a pleasure and a remembrance.

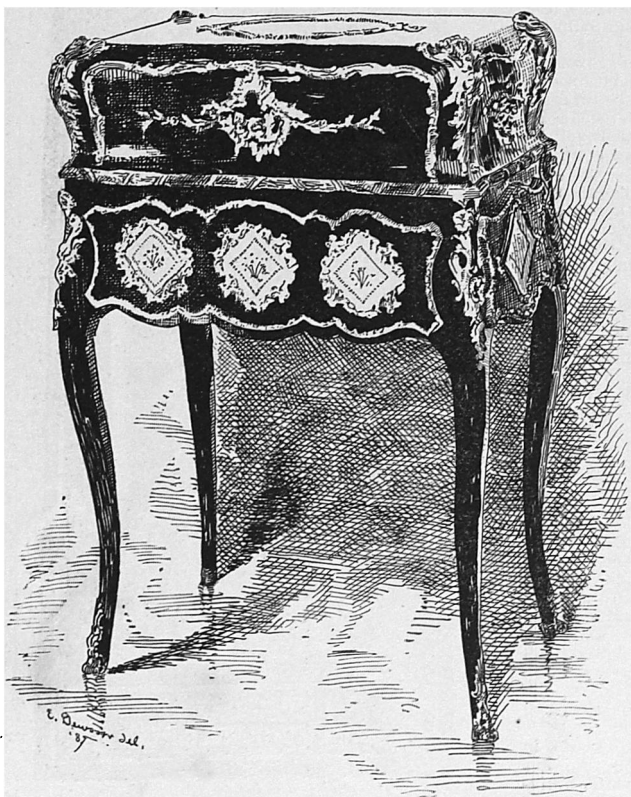
THE casual visitor to the warerooms of the PHENIX FURNITURE CO. would scarcely believe that the place had been almost entirely destroyed by fire but a few weeks since. The entire establishment has been reconstructed, and the floors are filled with the choicest productions of the cabinet maker's art. Among the specialties are some chamber sets in natural carved cherry; the finish and paneling are superb. The carving is especially fine and the general design beautiful and artistic. There are some very desirable walnut sets, plain and massive, also carved in light and graceful patterns. One of the leading features of this establishment is its perfect folding beds. The balancing is so perfect that the bed will stand at any angle where it may chance to be. The finish and design of these beds is of the very highest grade and excellence. They are made in plain and carved cherry, mahogany, walnut and oak, and have panel fronts or very fine bevelled edge mirrors of French



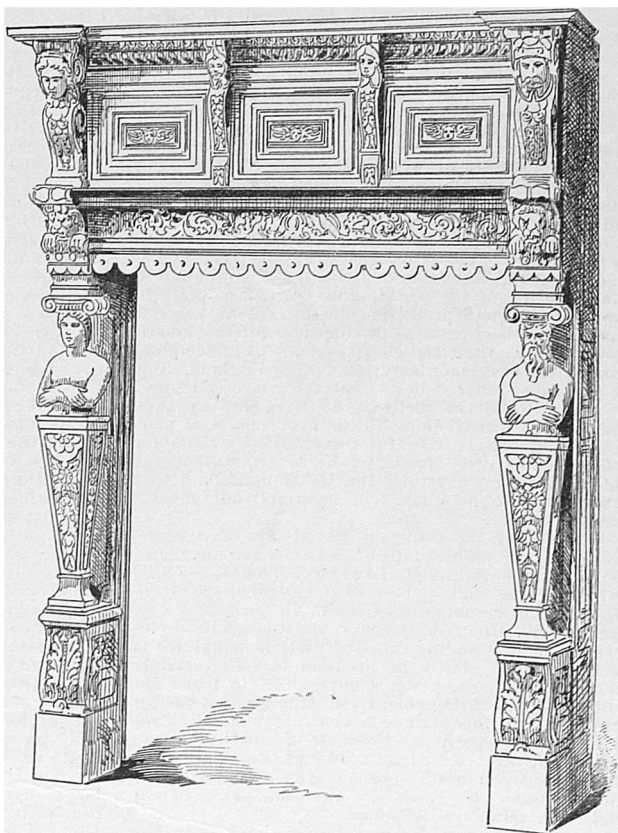
ANTIQUE DESK, CLOSED. EXHIBITED BY SYPHER & CO., NEW YORK.

plate glass. The case with which these beds open and close and their extraordinary beauty renders them notable even among the elegant articles with which they are surrounded. There are also some very elaborate and artistically designed bookcases, and a full assortment of hall racks and stands. New styles in sideboards are also shown and are very much to be commended for design and finish. They are made in plain patterns, and in mahogany, cherry, oak, walnut and maple.

PARLOR furniture is always attractive, especially when it presents new designs and ideas in woodwork or upholstery. Messrs. M. & H. SCHRENKEISEN are bringing out some special novelties in upholstery that deserve notice. A set is done in shell pattern the entire seat of a chair, representing one half of a fluted sea shell. The inner side of the back corresponds in effect. The outside of the back is plain plush, below the seat is a row of very elegant and elaborate fringe, that reaches nearly to the floor. There is a fancy for various colors in one set, the most approved being garnet, pale blue and old gold,



ANTIQUE LACE CABINET, EXHIBITED BY SYPHER & CO., NEW YORK.



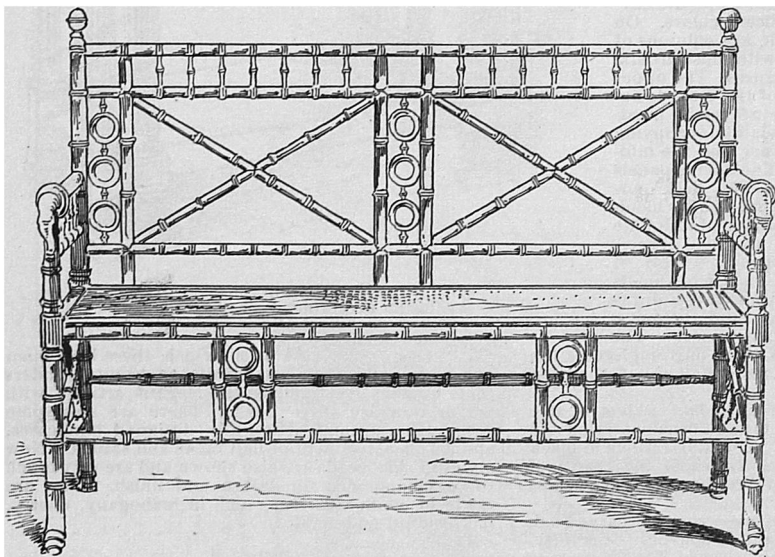
ANTIQUE MANTEL, EXHIBITED BY SYPHER & CO., NEW YORK.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

each color in a separate piece. There are new designs in brocatelle, made up in French fashion and very desirable. The exquisite taste displayed in this assortment commends it to all persons of artistic inclinations. A new department at Messrs. Schrenkeisen's is leather finished and covered furniture. A new style of chair is called the Governor Hubbard. It has Colonial suggestions and is finished with sunken panels and squares of embossed leather. Other styles of this chair are in plain wood or wood frames with leather seats. Some very tall backed rockers are the embodiment of comfort and invite rest by their perfect adjustment. New, slender, high backed low seated chairs are called whist chairs; they are very light, stylish and durable, and are having a decided run. The leather comes in various colors, and is either plain or illuminated, according to fancy. Dining chairs, with new embossed leather seats, are especially desirable for their unique designs and excellent workmanship.

* * *

THE history of American manufacturing industry presents no parallel to the LOWELL CARPET CO. Here, and more especially abroad, the steady decline in prices during the last fifty years and the competition born of rapidly increasing production, have almost invariably been met by a corresponding lowering in the grade of all manufactured articles. This has been especially true in England, where every reduction in price has been answered by a corresponding decline in quality, whether in cotton, wool, or anything else. A Lowell carpet, on



BAMBOO SOFA, MADE BY C. A. AIMONE, NEW YORK.

the other hand is, so far as the weight, durability and fineness of the fabric are concerned, the same as in our grandmothers days. Every decline in price has been overcome by improved processes and the introduction of more rapid machinery. It only differs from the carpet of half a century ago in the improvement which has been made in all manufacturing processes, and of which the Lowell Co. has been among the first to avail itself. In fact, had it not been for the enlightened liberality of this concern it is doubtful whether Mr. Bigelow would ever have been able to perfect the power loom, which laid the foundation of the modern carpet industry. Amid all the vicissitudes of trade, no matter how keen the competition at home or from abroad, without regard to tariffs, either on competing goods or on the raw material, the Lowell carpet has always been the same and has always been quoted as the standard. Very few outside the trade have any idea how bitter has been the fight to maintain its right to this supremacy. The ladies of '47, like those of '87, were wont to feel for the hollow stick, which even then was a distinguishing mark of Lowell goods, and it was not till the Company took the matter to the U. S. Court that it was able to establish its right even to a trade mark. Year after year it has been employing a corps of the best trained designers it could find in any quarter of the world, and year after year, in spite of the quasi protection of the Patent Laws, it has seen its best patterns produced in inferior goods, not only by a thousand cheap looms of Philadelphia, but by the best manufacturing skill of England. But it has never faltered in its straightforward course.

Meanwhile the methods of the Company have been those which belong to the best school of mercantile integrity. No dealer ever makes a claim for shortage in Lowell goods, for he is aware that the piece invariably overruns the ticket mark, and that the answer to his claim will invariably be "Send it back."

Moreover, the Company has always been represented by the highest type of the American merchant. From Amos & Abbot Lawrence, names honored wherever the white wings of commerce are seen, through their successors Geo. C. Richardson & Co., and Smith, Hogg & Gardner, the Company has always had a standing in distribution equal to its acknowledged ability in production. It certainly would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to name another manufacturing concern in America that has for half a century maintained so absolute a standard for integrity as regards its production, and has at the same time been backed by a line of merchants with the nerve and honesty to encourage and endorse such an adherence to principle. The fact is alike honorable to both maker and seller.

American axes are confessedly the best in the world, but no manufacturer has yet established so

complete a supremacy over his competitors that the Australian backwoodsman knows him from any other maker; American machine-made watches have no equals, but half a dozen concerns sell them wherever from the St. Lawrence to the Ganges railroads run on schedule time. It is left for the Lowell Company to be able to say that its goods are the standard by which all comparisons are made. No one ever questions their absolute and unalterable integrity.

The last five years have not been especially happy ones for the manufacturer of carpets. With a declining market he has seen a steadily increasing production. That through all this time the Lowell Company has gone on adding loom to loom and has found a market for its increased production is not only creditable to the men who have handled the goods, but it is an especially happy illustration of what may be called the Darwinism of Manufacture, for it is a proof of the theory of the survival of the fittest.

* * *

In no direction will the effect of the new law of Design Patents be more directly or beneficially felt than by the HARTFORD CARPET COMPANY, for no concern has suffered more by the operation of pattern pirates than this. Again and again it has been compelled to seek redress in the courts, only to find that a verdict in its favor meant very little, in fact, it was owing to the absurd dictum of Judge Blatchford in a Hartford case that the amendment to the patent laws became necessary for the protection of honest manufacturers. The Hartford Company has moreover always been an especially inviting field for the English manufacturer, and probably more of its designs have been copied abroad than of those of any other concern. The reason for this is not far to seek.

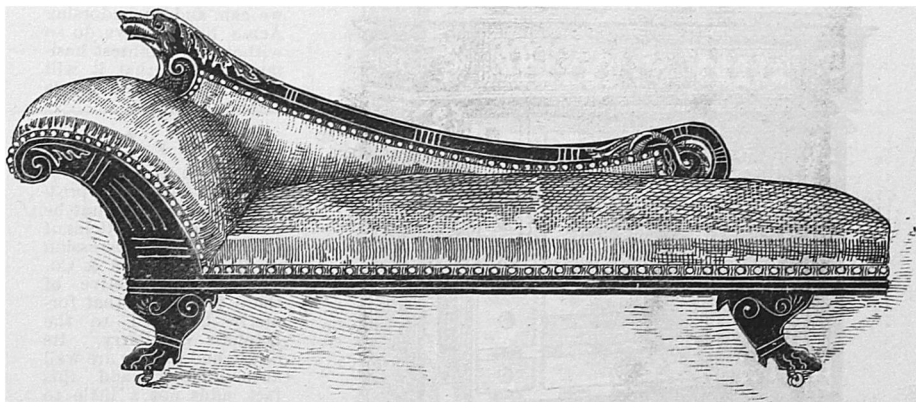
For many years the Hartford patterns have been extraordinarily popular. They seemed to exactly suit the American taste, and the company pursued a line of policy which helped this feeling, by employing as many native artists as possible. Some of the very best carpet designers in the world have grown up with the Hartford Company and are still in its employ. It is given to few men to recognize so promptly and certainly what the trade call a "seller" as to Mr. Keune Martin, who seems to know intuitively in what line the popular taste of the moment is traveling. Moreover, the Hartford Co. possesses another great advantage over some of its competitors. It is capitalized at so low a figure that when there comes a pressure it can meet the demand for lower prices, without changing the weight and fineness of its productions, more promptly and easily than many other concerns.

Mr. John L. Houston, the president of the company, and L. A. Upson, superintendent of the mills, have no superiors as practical manufacturers in the United States and are thoroughly versed in every detail of the carpet business. It was very largely due to the intelligent and able argument of Mr. Houston before the Patent Committees of Congress that the new law was passed, and not only the trade but the general public is indebted to him for the improvement which the law is destined to work in the industrial arts in this country.

* * *

In no other material of house furnishing has there been so great an improvement in the past ten years as in China matting. For thousands of years the almond-eyed celestial wove his two yard mats of white straw. Somewhere about the beginning of the Christian era he made a red-check pattern, and after this concession to progress took his stand against any further change, on the principle that what was good enough for Confucius was good enough for anyone who came later. But even Chinese conservatism could not stand against Yankee persistence.

The United States began to import the goods in large quantities until our normal consumption has become between 4,000,000 and 4,500,000 yards annually. Then the men who made long journeys to China in the interest of the importers began to insist



COUCH, MADE BY PHINEAS WARDELL, BOSTON, MASS.

on improvements. They first induced the weavers to make the goods in continuous pieces of forty yards. As an average Chinaman seldom comes over two and a half yards high it was difficult for him to understand why he should make his bed forty yards long, but he hesitated and was lost. Having secured seamless matting the buyer began to demand improvement in color and design, and finally gained a change from red check to blue or green or purple. Then came the introduction of small figures and tasteful shadings.

And now Messrs. W. & J. SLOANE bring out an extraordinary importation of goods which are as totally different and superior to anything that has gone before as can well be imagined. They are novel and curious both in design and color. The use of matting has already become common by trade decorators. In these new forms they have a material with which some beautiful wall and dado effects can be produced.

* * *

PHINEAS WARDELL, 55 Portland Street, Boston, manufactures a general line of Parlor Furniture of medium and good quality, consisting of parlor suits, odd chairs, lounges in divans and student chairs. All goods mounted satisfactorily, especial care taken in the finish, all work done by the day, and guaranteed to be all right in every respect. Commenced business here November 1, 1886, with five men, has now fifteen, with every prospect of further increase.



MEMORIAL STAINED GLASS WINDOW. MADE BY CONTINENTAL STAINED GLASS WORKS, BOSTON.